A N

HEROIC POSTSCRIPT

TO

THE PUBLIC.

BRITISH MUSEUM

A N

HEROIC POSTSCRIPT

T O

T H E P U B L I C,

Occaſioned by their favourable Reception of a late

HEROIC EPISTLE

To Sir WILLIAM CHAMBERS, Knt. &c.

By the AUTHOR of that EPISTLE.

Sicelides muſæ, paullo majora canamus. VIRGIL.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

D U B L I N:

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THE PUBLIC.

I THAT of late, Sir William's Bard, and Squire,
March'd with his helm and buckler on my lyre,
(What time the Knight prick'd forth in ill-ſtarr'd haſte,
Comptroller General of the works of taſte,)

B

NOTES.

Verſe 1. [I that of late]

Ille ego qui quondam, &c. VIRGIL, or ſomebody for him.

Verſe 4. [Works of taſte] Put ſynonimouſly for his Majeſty's works. See Sir *William's title page.* —

Now to the Public tune my grateful lays,
Warm'd with the ſun-ſhine of the Public praiſe;
Warm'd too with mem'ry of that golden time,
When Almon gave me reaſon for my rhyme;
—— glittering orbs, and, what endear'd them more,
Each glittering orb the ſacred features bore
Of George the good, the gracious, and the great,
Unfil'd, unſweated, all of ſterling weight;
Or, were they not, they paſs'd with current eaſe,
Good ſeemings then were good realities:
No Senate had convey'd, by ſmuggling art,
Pow'r to the mob to play Cadogan's part;
Now, thro' the land, that impious pow'r prevails,
All weigh their Sov'reign in their private ſcales,
And find him wanting: all ſave me alone,
For, ſad to ſay! my glittering orbs are gone.
But ill beſeems a Poet to repent,
Lightly they came, and full as lightly went.
Peace to their manes! may they never feel
Some keen Scotch banker's unrelenting ſteel;

NOTES.

Verſe 16. [Cadogan's part] Maſter of the Mint.

Verſe 19. [And find him wanting] Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. Daniel, Chap. 8. v. 27.

While I again the Muſe's ſickle bring
To cut down Dunces, whereſoe'er they ſpring,
Bind in poetic ſheaves the plenteous crop,
And ſtack my full-ear'd load in Almon's ſhop.
For now, my Muſe, thy fame is fixt as fate,
Tremble ye Fools I ſcorn, ye Knaves I hate;
I know the vigour of thy eagle wings,
I know thy ſtrains can pierce the ear of Kings.
Did China's monarch here in Britain doze,
And was, like weſtern Kings, a King of Proſe,
Thy ſong could cure his Aſiatic ſpleen,
And make him wiſh to ſee and to be ſeen;
That ſolemn vein of irony ſo fine,
Which, e'en Reviewers own, adorns thy line,

NOTES.

Verſe 34. [A King of Proſe] Kien-Long, the preſent Emperor of China is a poet. M. de Voltaire did him the honour to treat him as a brother above two years ago; and my late patron, Sir William Chambers, has given a fine and moſt intelligible proſe verſion of an ode of his Majeſty upon tea, in his poſtſcript to his Diſſertation. I am, however, vain enough to think, that the Emperor's compoſition would have appeared ſtill better in my heroic verſe; but Sir William foreſtalled it; on which account I have entirely broke with him.

Verſe 37. [That ſolemn vein of irony.] "A fine vein of ſolemn irony runs through this piece." See *Monthly Review*, under the article of the Heroic Epiſtle to Sir William Chambers.

Would make him ſoon againſt his greatneſs ſin,
Deſert his ſofa, mount his palanquin,
And poſt where'er the Goddeſs led the way,
Perchance to proud Spithead's imperial bay;
There ſhould he ſee, as other folks have ſeen,
That ſhips have anchors, and that ſeas are green,
Should own the tackling trim, the ſtreamers fine,
With Sandwich prattle, and with Bradſhaw dine,
And then ſail back, amid the cannon's roar,
As ſafe, as ſage, as when he left the ſhore.

Such is thy pow'r, O Goddeſs of the ſong,
Come then and guide my careleſs pen along;
Yet keep it in the bounds of ſenſe and verſe,
Nor, like Mac-Homer, make me gabble Erſe.
No, let the flow of theſe ſpontaneous rhymes
So truly touch the temper of the times,

NOTES.

Verſe 43. [There ſhould he ſee.] A certain naval event happened juſt about two calendar months after the publication of the Heroic Epiſtle. 'Twas impoſſible, conſidering the neceſſary preparations, it could have been ſooner. Facts are ſtubborn things.

Verſe 52. [Nor like Mac-Homer.] See, if the reader thinks it worth while, a late tranſlation of the Iliad.

That he who runs may read; while well he knows
I write in metre, what he thinks in proſe;
So ſhall my ſong, undiſciplin'd by art,
Find a ſure patron in each Engliſh heart.
If this it's fate, let all the frippery things
Be plac'd, be-penſion'd, and be-ſtarr'd by Kings,
Frown on the page, and with faſtidious eye,
Like old young Fannius, call it blaſphemy.
Let theſe prefer a levee's harmleſs talk,
Be aſk'd how often, and how far they walk,
Proud of a ſingle word, nor hope for more,
Tho' Jenkinſon is bleſt with many a ſcore:
For other ears my honeſt number ſound,
With other praiſe thoſe numbers ſhall be crown'd,
Praiſe that ſhall ſpread, no pow'r can make it leſs,
While Britain boaſts the bulwark of her preſs.

NOTES.

Verſe 62. [Like old young Fannius.] The noble perſonage here alluded to, being aſked to read the Heroic Epiſtle, ſaid, "No, it was as bad as blaſphemy."

Verſe 62. [Fannius.] Before I ſent the M. S. to the preſs, I diſcovered, that an accidental blot had made all but the firſt ſyllable of this name illegible. I was doubtful, therefore, whether to print it Fannius or Fannia. After much deliberation, I thought it beſt to uſe the maſculine termination. If I have done wrong, I aſk pardon, not only of the Author, but the Lady. *The Editor.*

Yes, ſons of freedom! yes, to whom I pay,
Warm from the heart, this tributary lay;
That lay ſhall live, tho' Court and Grub-ſtreet ſigh,
Your young Marcellus was not born to die.
The Muſe ſhall nurſe him up to man's eſtate,
And break the black aſperity of fate——
Admit him then your candidate for fame,
Pleas'd if in your review he read his name,
Tho' not with Maſon and with Goldſmith put,
Yet cheek by jowl with Garrick, Coleman, Foote;
But if with higher Bards that name you range,
His modeſty muſt think your judgment ſtrange—
So when o'er Crane-Court's philoſophic Gods,
The Jove-like majeſty of Pringle nods,
If e'er he chance to wake on Newton's chair,
He "wonders how the devil he came there."

Whate'er his fame or fate, on this depend;
He is, and means to be his country's friend.

NOTE.

Verſe 76. [And break the black aſperity of fate.]

——————— "*Si qua fata aſpera rumpas,*
Tu Marcellus eris." VIRGIL.

'Tis but to try his ſtrength that now he ſports
With Chineſe gardens, and with Chineſe courts:
But if that country claim a graver ſtrain,
If real danger threat fair Freedom's reign,
If hireling P**rs, in proſtitution bold,
Sell her as cheaply as themſelves they ſold;
Or they, who honour'd by the People's choice,
Againſt that People lift their rebel voice,
And, baſely crouching for their paltry pay,
Vote the beſt birthright of her ſons away,
Permit a nation's in-born wealth to fly
In mean, unkingly prodigality;
Nor, e'er they give, aſk how the ſums were ſpent,
So quickly ſquander'd, tho' ſo lately lent——
If this they dare; the thunder of his ſong,
Rolling in deep-ton'd energy along,
Shall ſtrike, with Truth's dread bolt, each miſcreant's name,
Who, dead to duty, ſenſeleſs e'en to ſhame
Betray'd his country. Yes, ye faithleſs crew,
His Muſe's vengeance ſhall your crimes purſue,
Stretch you on ſatire's rack, and bid you lie
Fit garbage for the hell-hound, Infamy.

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